

**SOVIET  
JEWS:**

**FACT  
AND  
FICTION**



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## To the Reader

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For many years now, bourgeois propaganda in the West, especially spokesmen for Zionist organizations in the United States and Great Britain and numerous Zionist publications in these countries, have been trying to put over the idea that there is anti-Semitism and discrimination against Jews in the USSR.

This propaganda campaign was intensified in connection with the Soviet Union's position regarding Israel's aggression against the neighbouring Arab states in June 1967.

Lacking evidence of anti-Semitism in the USSR bourgeois propaganda resorts to outright distortions and garbled facts. To make their allegations ring true bourgeois propagandists refer to articles in the Soviet press which expose the reactionary nature of Zionism, denounce the adventurist position of the Israeli extremists torpedoing efforts to arrive at a settlement of the acute military and political crisis in the Middle East. The bourgeois press bemoans the alleged growing Soviet anti-Semitism, persecution of Jews, etc. Attempts are made to draw a parallel between Zionist ideology and Israeli extremists on the one hand, and Soviet Jews, on the other.

The anti-Soviet, anti-communist propaganda in the West purposely overlooks the simple fact

that in the 50-odd years of Soviet government more than one generation of Jews have been brought up on the communist ideals. Hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews are members of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Nine out of every ten young Jews between 14 and 28, i.e. at least one third of all Soviet Jews, are members of the Young Communist League. The loyalty of non-Party and religious Jews to their socialist homeland has never been questioned.

Bourgeois propaganda doubts or ignores any positive information concerning the life of Soviet Jewry. As a matter of fact, blatant bourgeois propaganda against alleged Soviet anti-Semitism becomes overt propagation of national intolerance and hatred. It is easy to understand Soviet Jews' reaction to the flood of anti-Soviet abuse, false charges and hypocritical lamentations of the bourgeois press under the pretext of protecting Soviet Jews.

The imperialist circles, in cahoots with the Zionists, have lately been exploiting the so-called Jewish question in an attempt to fan anti-communist and anti-Soviet feelings. They deliberately distort the theoretical propositions of Marxism-Leninism on the national question and misinterpret the Programme of the Soviet Communist Party in the sphere of national relations.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to explain the essence of the Soviet state's nationality policy and to reply to a number of questions concerning the life of the Jews in the USSR.

*Novosti Press Agency*



## Historical Background

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### **Jews in the Russian Empire, and the Nationality Policy of Russian Autocracy**

Jews have lived in this country since ancient times. Historians claim that several centuries before the Christian Era (after the fall of the first Temple) many Palestinian Jews had reached the shores of Colchis and spread over the Caucasus. According to history records, a compact Jewish community had settled in Georgia by the time the Barcocheba riot broke out in 132 A.D. This is also borne out by archeological diggings in different parts of Georgia, especially in Mtskheta—its ancient capital.

Later on Jews appeared in other parts of the country.

They first settled in Kiev Rus and Lithuania in approximately the 8th century. At the beginning of the 15th century there were Jewish communities in Byelorussia. The first mention of Jews in the history of Muscovy Rus was in 1474.

By the time of the Tatar invasion in the 13th century there were large settlements of Jews on the banks of the Volga, the Don and the Dnieper. When the Grand Kiev Principality was destroyed by the Tatars most of the Jews fled to Poland.

With the partitioning of Poland at the end of the 18th century Russia obtained areas traditionally inhabited by Jews. Formally they were given the "right to enjoy all advantages" but this "right" was never realized. Shortly afterwards the Jews were subjected to special statutes specifying a number of restrictions, provisos and bans. Such inequality was thus institutionalized and became part of tsarist policy for over a century and a half.

In the outlying regions inhabited by various nationalities the tsarist government pursued a great-power, anti-popular policy, instituting, in fact, a regime of colonial oppression and cruelly exploiting the toiling masses. As a consequence many peoples and nationalities of Russia were extremely backward economically, politically and culturally. Illiteracy was widespread, medical aid was nonexistent and they were doomed to starvation, disease and gradual extinction.

Following the "divide and rule" motto of ancient Rome, tsarism fostered national discord and hatred in the country, setting one nation against another.

It is quite obvious that anti-Semitism in Russia was a natural consequence of the policy of Russian autocracy.

At the end of the 18th century Jews were "frozen" in certain provinces of the Empire into a pale of settlement. According to the law introduced by Catherine II Jews could reside only in the Minsk, Volyn, Podolia, Chernigov, Kiev, Mogilyov, Poltava, Vitebsk and Grodno provinces.

What, in fact, was the essence of the ignominious Jewish pale? Massed in small communities

and townships, the Jews were artificially isolated. Strangers among strangers, hated and at best tolerated, the Jews were increasingly divorced from society and withdrew into their restricted community life. They were driven out of the villages—Tsar Alexander I forbade them to live in the villages and engage in farming. In the main they became artisans or engaged in trading. Commenting on the plight of Jews in Russia the famous Russian revolutionary and literary critic, one of Lenin's associates, Anatoly Lunacharsky wrote: "As the centuries went by, the bulk of the three-million Jewish population of Russia degenerated into small-chested, miserable, short-sighted weaklings tortured by foul air and malnutrition, who were capable only of becoming shoemakers, tailors and petty traders, and nothing else. Jews were becoming people who had to 'feed on air' and rack their brains to find some means of earning a miserable livelihood to support themselves and their families. They were becoming a people with an enormously high infant mortality rate, people who suffered beyond belief and lived in staggering, unimaginable squalor and unhealthy conditions."

Tsarism did everything to prevent the Jews from getting an education. There was a quota for Jews—only 10 per cent of the enrolment in secondary schools, and 3 to 5 per cent in higher educational establishments. Only an insignificant number of well-to-do Jews could benefit from this.

The tsarist government did not confine its anti-Semitic policy to official legislation. Hatred of Jews was fostered in the church and schools, in literature, by means of "scientific" anti-Semi-

tism, provocative tales about Jewish rituals, etc.

By blaming the Jews for all misfortunes and calamities, the tsarist government deliberately and systematically diverted the discontent of the masses into national hatred and incited anti-Semitism. In 1903 the Kishinev pogrom shocked all Europe. Pogroms continued until the Belostok slaughter of 1906. From October 18 to 29, 1905 alone there were pogroms in 690 towns, settlements and villages. Tens of thousands were killed, or maimed in this bloodbath.

This is how the Holy Synod's Chief Procurator Pobedonostsev defined the tsarist government's policy towards the Jews: "We must," he said, "pursue a policy that will force one-third of the Jews to embrace Christianity, do away with one-third of the Jews and compel the last third to emigrate." The last part of the programme was carried out to the letter. From 1881 to 1914 one-third of the Jewish population emigrated from Russia.

Many thousands of Jewish working people were actively involved in the revolutionary struggle against Russian tsarism. Jewish intellectuals such as Maxim Litvinov, Solomon Lazovsky, V. Volodarsky (Moisei Goldstein), and Moisei Uritski became outstanding revolutionaries.

### **The Struggle of Russian Bolsheviks Against Anti-Semitism and Zionism**

The Bolsheviks consistently fought for equality of Jews.

In 1914, the Bolsheviks introduced in the Fourth State Duma a bill on national equality

drafted by Lenin. The third paragraph of the bill read: "All laws, temporary regulations and references in law that limit the Jews in any sphere of social and state life are repealed. Article 767 (Vol. IX) which states that 'the general laws apply to the Jews in all cases where there are no special provisions with regard to Jews' is repealed." This was followed by an enumeration of the restrictions to be repealed.

Speaking on the bill that year, Lenin pointed out that the Jewish problem could only be settled together with the other basic problems facing Russia. "It goes without saying," he said, "that we cannot expect the nationalistic Fourth Duma to repeal restrictions against the Jews and other 'aliens'. But the working class must raise its voice. And the voice of the Russian worker must ring out with particular force in protest against national oppression."

Lenin consistently exposed the reactionary nature of political Zionism and the national narrow-mindedness of Bundists—a group of Jewish Social-Democrats who sought to separate Jewish workers from socialists of other nationalities.

As far back as the Second Party Congress in 1902 Lenin stressed the need for complete unity of the proletariat of all nationalities to attain the ultimate goal—Communism. He also wrote that "complete unity between the Jewish and non-Jewish proletariat is moreover especially necessary for a successful struggle against anti-Semitism, this despicable attempt of the government and exploiting classes to exacerbate racial particularism and national enmity."

Lenin's articles *Does the Jewish Proletariat Need an Independent Political Party?*, *Maximum*

*Brazenness and Minimum Logic*, and *The Position of the Bund in the Party* were a theoretical and political analysis of political Zionism, that extreme expression of bourgeois nationalism.

Emphasizing a principled "Social-Democratic attitude to Zionism and anti-Semitism" Lenin said that Zionism was only superficially opposed to anti-Semitism while in fact it was inclined to bring about alienation and separatism in the working-class movement. Extolling the supposed primogeniture of the Jewish people who allegedly occupied a special position among nations, in reality Zionism sought to preserve the ghetto frame of mind—a survival of the shameful past.

Lenin concluded that Zionism was a form of bourgeois nationalism opposed to proletarian internationalism. Jewish nationalists, turning "the regrettable isolation of the Bund into a fetish begin to seek grounds justifying their isolation, and in this search will now grasp at the Zionist idea of a Jewish '*nation*,' now resort to demagoguery and scurrilities," Lenin wrote. He pointed out that along with a biased attitude to other nations Zionists called for "a class peace" between the Jewish working class and the Jewish bourgeoisie within "a single Jewish nation."

Contrary to socialism which shows the way to rapprochement of all nations, Jewish bourgeois nationalism leads to disunity of nations and propagates the idea of "the chosen nation." "This Zionist idea is absolutely false and essentially reactionary," Lenin wrote. "...Can we possibly attribute to chance the fact that it is the reactionary forces all over Europe, and especially in Russia who oppose the assimilation of the Jews and try to perpetuate their isolation...? The idea

of a Jewish 'nationality' is definitely reactionary not only when expounded by its consistent advocates (the Zionists), but likewise on the lips of those who try to combine it with the ideas of Social-Democracy (the Bundists)."

Lenin pointed out that Zionism is alien to Marxism. It was not accidental that immediately after the October Revolution the Zionist leaders in Russia called upon their organizations to oppose Soviet power. The Zionists held a secret meeting in Moscow where a document was adopted in which their anti-Soviet, anti-communist programme was laid down in these words: "*Socialism blocks the way of Zionism. Zionism and socialism are not only mutually repelling poles but two elements completely excluding each other.*"

### **Triumph of the Leninist Nationality Policy**

The proclamation of Soviet power and the Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia signed by Lenin on November 16, 1917, just after the victory of the Great October Revolution, granted genuine freedom to all peoples. The Declaration stipulated that the Soviet government was "guided in its activities with regard to the nationalities of Russia" by the following principles:

"1. Equality and sovereignty of all peoples of Russia.

"2. The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, including secession and the formation of the independent state.

"3. The abolition of all national and national-religious privileges and restrictions.

"4. Free development of the national minorities and ethnic groups inhabiting Russia."

The Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia was the first major step of the Soviet state towards national emancipation of the peoples of the former Russian Empire. It was enthusiastically hailed by the working masses of all national minorities in the country. Together with other decrees ("On Peace," "On Land," "On Nationalization") aimed at creating a society of social justice, the Declaration helped rally all the peoples of Russia around the Bolshevik Party, consolidate the revolutionary gains and rebuff the counter-revolutionary forces.

The first President of the young Soviet state was a Jew, Yakov Sverdlov (1885-1919)—an outstanding revolutionary, Lenin's friend and associate.

Early in 1918 Lenin sponsored a decree separating the Church from the State. The decree gave the Jews, like other nationalities regarded as religious groups in old Russia, the juridical status of nationality.

A decree issued in 1919 states that persecution of any nation is impermissible and "the Council of People's Commissars declares the anti-Semitic movement and pogroms a menace to the cause of the workers' and peasants' revolution and calls on all the working people of all the nations of socialist Russia to fight this menace by every means available."

When the draft of this document was ready Lenin added in his own hand: "The Council of People's Commissars orders all Soviets of Depu-



ties to take drastic measures to cut short the anti-Semitic movement. Organizers of and participants in pogroms and those conducting agitation for pogroms are to be outlawed." In a speech given in March 1919 he stressed: "Only the most ignorant and downtrodden people can believe the lies and slander that are spread about Jews." And he concluded: "Shame on those who foment hatred towards the Jews, who foment hatred towards other nations."

The social basis for anti-Semitism gradually vanished as socialism took firm hold. Relationships between people have changed basically. Gone is the economic competition which the ruling classes used to foster national discord.

The USSR Constitution and the penal codes of all the Union Republics provide for severe punishment (imprisonment from six months to three years or exile from two to five years) for any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or, conversely, the establishment of any direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt.

97.6 per cent of the multi-national population of the USSR acquired national statehood in the form of Union and Autonomous Republics, Autonomous Regions and National Areas.

This is how the nationality policy, devised by Lenin, was consistently carried into effect.

# Soviet Jews Today

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## Where They Live

According to the 1970 census, there were 2,151,000 Jews in the country.

Soviet Jewry also include three small groups differing as to ethnography, culture and customs. These are Georgian Jews (some 60 thousand, the native tongue—Georgian, worship in Hebrew), mountain Jews—Tats (a little over 30 thousand, live in Dagestan, mainly in the town of Derbent, the native tongue—Tat, worship in Hebrew), and Bukhara Jews in Uzbekistan (over 10 thousand, the native tongue—Uzbek, worship in Hebrew).

Had it not been for the war there would have been at least four million Jews in the Soviet Union. Almost two million were killed in nazi-occupied territory. In Babyi Yar—scene of a horrible mass slaughter—the nazis exterminated some 200 thousand people, including about 70 thousand Jews and over a hundred thousand Russians and Ukrainians. Large numbers of Jews were killed in the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Moldavia, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.

Even more lives would have been lost if the state had not taken timely and resolute measu-

res to evacuate large numbers of people from the frontline areas. Nearly two million Jews were evacuated to the rear.

In 1959 there were 240,000 Jews living in Moscow (4.5 per cent of the total population of the city); 170,000 in Leningrad (5.1 per cent); 154,000 in Kiev (13.9 per cent); 39,000 in Minsk (7.6 per cent); 17,000 in Vilnius (7.0 per cent); 43,000 in Kishinev (19.9 per cent); 31,000 in Riga (5.0 per cent); 17,400 in Tbilisi (2.5 per cent); 72,430 in the Dnepropetrovsk Region (3.8 per cent); 84,000 in the Kharkov Region (5.3 per cent); 42,000 in the Vinnitsa Region (11.6 per cent); 30,000 in the Lvov Region (3.6 per cent); 40,000 in the Chernovtsy Region (20.1 per cent); 120,000 in the Odessa Region (12.4 per cent); 43,000 in the Gomel Region (11.0 per cent); 28,000 in the Mogilev Region (7.6 per cent). The ratio has remained unchanged.

Many Soviet people, including Jews, have gone to Siberia and the Urals to the new construction sites. There are nearly 40,000 Jews in three Siberian regions—Novosibirsk, Omsk and Irkutsk, and about 30,000 in the Sverdlovsk and Chelyabinsk Regions in the Urals.

Many Jews evacuated during the war from the western regions (the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Lithuania and Moldavia) to the hinterland gradually adjusted to the new localities. Today, for instance, there are one hundred thousand Jews in Uzbekistan where hundreds of thousands of Jews found refuge during the war.

Most Jews who came back from the places of evacuation and from the front settled mainly in big towns.

There are about 15 thousand Jews in the Jewish Autonomous Region of which Birobidjan is the centre. The Region was formed in 1934 on the decision of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR—the supreme organ of power at that time.

The Jewish Autonomous Region is situated in the Soviet Far East and is part of the Khabarovsk Territory. Surrounded by the picturesque Khingan Mountains, it stretches along the Amur, a deep river in the Far East, and its tributaries, the Bira and the Bidjan. It occupies an area of 35,800 sq. km.—larger than that of Belgium.

The Jewish Autonomous Region consists of five administrative districts. There are two cities—Birobidjan and Obluchye, 12 urban communities including Hingansk, Bira, Birakan, Londoko, Teplozersk and Smidovich, and 43 villages.

There are over 160,000 people in the Region. Besides Jews the population includes Russians, Ukrainians and Byelorussians.

In 1934, at the time the Region was formed, all it had in the way of industry was 15 handicraft shops and a dozen small factories. Now it has big enterprises making non-ferrous products, machinery, cement, timber products, paper, textile, knitwear, footwear, food, and building materials.

At present, industry there turns out more goods in one week (in terms of money) than in the whole of 1934.

The Region's industrial progress is accompanied by agricultural growth. Good harvests of wheat, potatoes and other vegetables, rice, soy

and other crops are obtained on what was formerly dense taiga.

There has been a marked change in the people of the Region. Former artisans and petty traders from Jewish settlements have become builders, timber-workers, mechanics, machine-builders, tractor-drivers, farmers, teachers, engineers, doctors, factory and farm managers and heads of state institutions.

The Jewish Autonomous Region has many cultural and educational establishments, including 160 schools with approximately 50,000 pupils. There are teachers' training, medical, technical and music schools, and a school training farm-machinery operators.

Birobidjan has two people's theatres—a Jewish and a Russian theatre. They perform in the town itself and in the outlying areas. Jewish actors from Moscow, Leningrad and other cities frequently give performances there.

A Russian and a Yiddish newspapers are published in Birobidjan. Contributions by local Jewish writers—prose, poetry and criticism—appear in the Moscow magazine *Sovetisch Heimland*. The Region's Sholem Aleichem library frequently arranges Yiddish literary evenings, and there are daily broadcasts in Yiddish.

In 1967, the Jewish Autonomous Region was awarded the Order of Lenin—the highest government decoration—for outstanding economic and cultural achievements.

## Occupation

Before the Revolution the Jewish population of tsarist Russia consisted of:

	Percentage
Workers in big enterprises	4.0
Workers in cottage industries	11.0
Handicraftsmen	18.4
Peasants	2.2
Office workers	10.0
Traders, small shopkeepers, dealers and persons with no definite occupation	54.4

During Soviet years the social makeup of the Jewish population has changed radically.

Even in the early 30s over 20 per cent of the Jews were engaged in state-owned and co-operative enterprises and about 30 per cent were office workers. Today Jews work in all sectors of the Soviet economy. The so-called Jewish occupations have long since become a thing of the past. Now Jews are not only doctors and lawyers, shoemakers and tailors, but also workers in the building and the iron and steel industry. They are fitters, lathe-operators, mechanics, locomotive and truck drivers, miners, pilots, teachers, office workers, artists, actors, architects, Party functionaries, geologists, seamen, army officers, writers, journalists and scientists.

The personal success of any individual in this country, his social standing and career depend on his skill, abilities and diligence. Nationality or race is not taken into account.

### **Participation in State Management**

Among deputies to the USSR Supreme Soviet, the Supreme Soviets of the Republics and local Soviets about eight thousand are Jews. The deputies elected to the highest body of state power,

the USSR Supreme Soviet, at the last election held on July 14, 1970 included, for example, Academician Yuli Khariton; Vladimir Peller, Chairman of the collective farm "Zavety Ilyicha" in the Jewish Autonomous Region; Mikhail Abelman, Chairman of the Executive Council of the Lenin District Soviet of Working People's Deputies in the Jewish Autonomous Region; Kostas Glikas, Chairman of the Lenin Collective Farm in the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic and Alexander Chakovsky, writer and editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Literaturnaya Gazeta*.

Well-known in the country are the names of Veniamin Dymshitz, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers; Dr. Lev Volodarsky, Deputy Director of the Central Board of Statistics of the USSR Council of Ministers; Yuli Bokserman, Deputy Minister of the Gas Industry of the USSR; Iosif Ravich, Deputy Minister of Communications of the USSR; Leonid Glikman, Deputy Minister of the Chemical and Petroleum Machine Building Industry of the USSR; Abram Levinsky, Deputy Minister of Electric Engineering of the USSR; Aron Gindin, member of the State Council for Science and Technology; Professor Alexander Birman, Prorector of the Plekhanov Institute of Economics.

From amongst the people, from amongst those who cast aside the isolated and restricted way of life within the Jewish pale when the revolution began, came such noted soldiers as twice Hero of the Soviet Union, Colonel-General David Dragunsky; Colonel-General Alexander Tsirlin; Heroes of the Soviet Union Lieutenant-Generals Matvei Vainraub and Shimon Krivoshein;

Guards Lieutenant-General Grigory Plaskov, author of the famous war memoirs; General of the Army Yakov Kreizer, and Hero of the Soviet Union Major-General Zinovy Kontsevoi. All of them hold responsible posts in the Soviet Armed Forces.

### **Contribution to Science and Education**

The USSR Central Board of Statistics issued the following figures as to the number of Jews engaged in research:

Year	Number
1958	28,966
1960	33,529
1966	56,070
1967	58,952
1968	60,995

In the same period the number of Ukrainians engaged in research work increased from 27,803 to 87,578. Populationwise there are 20 times as many Ukrainians as Jews in the Soviet Union.

Jews comprise the third greatest number of research workers (after Russians and Ukrainians) though they only account for slightly over one per cent of the country's population.

Twenty Jews are members and corresponding members of the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences. They include such famous scientists as Semyon Volfkovich, Isaak Mints, Bentsion Vul, Israil Gelfond, Alexander Grinberg and Alexander Frumkin.

Fourteen per cent of the total Jewish population in the country have a higher or specialized secondary education.



Figures of the number of Jewish college students are as follows:

Academic Year	Number
1962/63	79,300
1965/66	94,000
1967/68	110,000
1968/69	111,900

This means that 3.15% of the Jewish population are students whereas the proportion of students to the total population is 1.82%.

What is the reason for the high percentage of Jews in Soviet science and education? It is not a matter of special privileges for Jews since in the Soviet Union there are no privileges or advantages because of nationality. The reason lies elsewhere. Sociologists explain it by the fact that the majority of the Jews live in cities and towns, whereas the proportion of urban dwellers on the whole is 56 per cent. And, as is known, townsfolk make up the bulk of the specialists.

## Culture

Jewish writers, poets and people in the arts have been contributing greatly to the Soviet culture. Two hundred and ten Jewish writers, artists, actors and other cultural workers have been awarded the State Prize, and nine are Lenin Prize winners. The following writers have won general recognition among the Soviet people: Samuel Marshak, Ilya Ehrenburg, Pavel Antakolsky, Vera Inber, Emmanuel Kazakevich, Vasily Grossman, Isaak Babel, Mikhail Svetlov and many others.

Violinists David Oistrakh and Leonid Kogan,

ballerina Maya Plisetskaya, film directors Mikhail Romm, Mark Donskoi, Grigory Roshal, Sergey Yutkevich, Roman Karmen, singer Mark Reizen, actors Leonid Utyosov, Arkady Raikin, conductor Natan Rakhlin, composer Moisei Vainberg are well known and admired both at home and abroad.

Books by Jewish authors are printed in large editions in this country. They are published in Yiddish and in the languages of the other peoples of the USSR.

During the past few years Sholem Aleichem's works have appeared in a six-volume Russian edition and a four-volume Ukrainian edition. A new, enlarged Russian edition of Sholem Aleichem's works (250,000 copies) will be published in 1971. Millions of copies of his works have been printed. Altogether over 300 books by Jewish authors have been translated from Yiddish into Russian and other languages of the Soviet peoples in the last few years, totalling more than 40 million copies.

Books in Yiddish are published regularly. In 1968 and 1969 books by David Vendrov, David Gofstein, Mendel Lifshitz, Ilya Gordon, Grigory Dobin, Avraam Gontar, Iosif Rabin, Girsh Osherovich and Sammuil Gordon were printed. Books by Aron Vergelis, Isaak Borukhovich, Itzik Kipnis, Girsch Polyanker and other will soon appear.

An important event in Soviet literary life was the publication of an anthology in Yiddish of modern Jewish prose including the works of over 50 writers.

A Jewish literary monthly —*Sovetisch Heimland*—has been published in Moscow since 1961.

It has a monthly circulation of 25,000 copies. The works of over one hundred Jewish writers living in various parts of the country—Moscow, Kiev, Minsk, Vilnius, Riga, Birobidjan, Odessa, Kharkov, Chernovtsy, Kazan, etc., appear regularly in the magazine.

Dozens of novels and hundreds of short stories have been published by the magazine. The contributors include David Vendrov, Elli Shekhtman, Natan Lurie, Iosif Rabin, Itsik Kipnis, Sammuil Gordon, Grigory Polyanker, Ikhil Falikman, Ikhil Shraibman, Natan Zabara, Moisei Altman, Boris Miller, Riva Rubina, Grigory Dobin, Mikhail Lev, Khaim Melamud and many others.

Poems by Girsh Osherovich, Moisei Teif, Yakov Sternberg, Aron Vergelis, Shloime Roitman, Isaak Borukhovich, Khanan Vainerman, Avraam Gontar, Matvei Grubian, Yevsei Driz, Khaim Maltinsky, Matvei Saktsier, Riva Balyasnaya, Dora Khaikina, Matvei Talalaevsky, Meyer Kharats, Iosif Lerner, Mendel Lifshitz, Shifra Kholodenko and David Bromberg appear frequently.

Aside from Jewish authors, Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Moldavian, Lithuanian and Chuvash writers contribute to the magazine.

*Sovetisch Heimland* also prints material by Jewish writers living in the United States, France, Israel, Poland, Argentine and other countries.

The Jewish drama company in Moscow directed by Benjamin Shvartser, Merited Artiste of the Russian Federation, is very popular. There are some 20 actors in the company whose repertoire includes "Two Hundred Thousand" and

"Tevye the Milkman" by Sholem Aleichem, "Spaniards" by Lermontov and "Witch" by Golfaden. The company gives performances in different towns and communities of the country.

"Wondering Stars" presented by Anna Guzik's group has been a hit with the public for a number of years now.

Sidi Tahl's group from Chernovtsy presents musical skits and sketches mainly in the Ukraine and Moldavia.

The Leningrad Jewish drama company directed by E. Roitman often gives guest performances in other cities. Its repertoire consists mainly of Sholem Aleichem's stories.

Recitations by Emmanuel Kaminka, Iosif Kolin and Sofia Saitan are enjoyed by lovers of Jewish literature. Concerts of Jewish songs by Klementina Shermel, Mikhail Magid and Mikhail Alexandrovich are well attended.

Jewish amateur art groups are also very popular. The Vilnius, Birobidjan and Kishinev amateur companies have been classed as people's theatres for their high standard of acting and production. These people's theatres give performances of works by Sholem Aleichem and modern authors.

At least half a million people a year attend performances by the Jewish professional and amateur drama companies.

## Religion

The Soviet Union has nearly one hundred synagogues located in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Vilnius, Riga, Kishinev, Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Tashkent, Odessa and many other cities. Besides,

there are more than 300 minyans in various places, large and small, where religious Jews live. (A minyan is a group of at least ten Jewish male worshippers.)

In the Soviet Union the Church is separated from the State. Therefore the number of churches, synagogues, mosques and houses of worship depends on the requirements and financial resources of the communities and parishioners and not on the state.

It should be mentioned that the majority of the Soviet people long ago became atheists, by no means as a result of state coercion. The overwhelming majority have a materialistic world outlook, and Jews are no exception.

There is no official record of the number of believers in this country. But sociologists established by sampling that 3-6 per cent of the Jews in the Russian Federation and the Ukraine are religious. In the Baltic republics—Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia—the figure is 5-9 per cent, in Georgia, the Northern Caucasus and Bukhara—7-12 per cent. Mostly they are aged people.

However, during big religious festivals—Simhath Torah, Rosh Hashana, Passover—many non-worshipping Jews in keeping with national traditions gather near the synagogues to make merry, sing and dance. Jewish national dishes are frequently served in Jewish families on traditional holidays when relatives, friends and colleagues gather together.

In the Soviet Union believers are absolutely free to profess any religion and to perform their religious ceremonies and rituals. This is specifically stated in the Constitution.

Each year before Passover, Jewish religious

communities start baking matzoh. The mechanized bakery of the Moscow Central Synagogue bakes about 100 tons of matzoh annually. Synagogues have their own poultry slaughter pens and kosher meat shops.

The religious calendar is published by the Moscow Central Synagogue every year. In 1968, it put out a new prayer book in a total of 10,000 copies edited by Chief Rabbi Levin.

The libraries of synagogues have thousands of religious books. The Moscow Central Synagogue has a theological school—the Yeshiva—training rabbis, shohets, etc.

### **Assimilation**

Thirteen million people from among non-Russian minorities consider Russian as their native tongue. This includes most of the Jewish population. At the same time many Russians who were born or had lived for a long time in national republics or regions other than the Russian Federation named the languages of those republics or regions as their native tongue. The Jews in the USSR consider their mother tongue the language of the republic they live in. In the Russian Federation it is Russian, in the Ukraine—Russian and Ukrainian, in Georgia—Georgian, etc. In 1926 more than 70 per cent of the Jewish population considered Jewish (Yiddish) to be their native tongue, and in 1970 the figure had dropped to 17.7 per cent.

By the way, this is not anything peculiar to the Soviet Union. In the United States, for instance, hardly over a fifth of the Jewish population give Yiddish as their mother tongue. This

proportion is even less in France and Great Britain.

Yiddish is spoken by a small group of people, and it is mostly the older generation who read literature in Yiddish.

But Yiddish is undoubtedly alive. It can be heard in Deribasovskaya Street in Odessa, on Kreshchatik in Kiev, in the streets of Vilnius and Chernovtsy, in Moscow concert halls, over the radio and TV. Contemporary Jewish writers and poets write poems, stories, novels and essays in Yiddish.

It is common knowledge that in a multi-national state assimilation is an inevitable natural process. Under socialism, and eventually communism, when national and racial prejudices have disappeared completely, the process of the amalgamation of nations, of natural assimilation will be expedited. It will contribute to the mutual enrichment of cultures which, in the final analysis, will help form an integrated communist community of people possessing the best of the national cultures of different peoples.

In his works Lenin comprehensively elaborated the national question, and the question of bringing nations closer together.

On the centenary of the birth of V. I. Lenin the Theses of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union stressed that he taught revolutionaries consistently to take into account national interests, to defend the principles of equality of all nations, their right to sovereignty and independent development. Lenin showed that the struggle for socialism, to build it and to defend it, was the best way to fight for the national interests of the people, thereby help-

ing bring them closer together on a class, internationalist basis.

In the Soviet Union the process of natural assimilation involves many national groups. In Uzbekistan, for instance, there are several hundred thousand Tajiks. They speak both Tajik and Uzbek. A considerable number of Uzbekistan's intellectuals are of Tajik stock. Every year a part of the Tajik population is assimilated there.

Not only the Jews, but also Armenians and Tatars (above all, the intellectuals), especially those who live outside their national republics, are becoming assimilated fairly rapidly.

Under tsarism the Jews were compelled to lead a miserable life within the boundaries of a strictly limited area. Now they live in all fifteen Soviet republics. This is not merely a result of the abolition of the Jewish pale. There is a constant shifting of all the nationalities of the USSR. Only 80 per cent of the Russians now live in the Russian Federation. They live and work in the Ukraine, in Kazakhstan, in Uzbekistan and the other Union Republics.

Only a little over 86 per cent of the Ukrainians live in the Ukraine. Many Ukrainians live and work in the Russian Federation, in Kazakhstan and Moldavia.

One-fourth of the Tajik population live in Uzbekistan and other Central Asian Republics. Only 56 per cent of the Armenian population live in Armenia—the rest of them live mainly in the neighbouring republics of Georgia and Azerbaijan and in some regions of the Russian Federation.

Such population shifts help bring the nations closer together and help establish common tra-



ditions and many common features as to a mode of life.

As Lenin foresaw, the socialist nations of our country are enjoying growing prosperity, drawing closer together and benefitting from greater contact with one another. Closer intercourse, and greater understanding of the tasks of the country as a whole, help to successfully overcome manifestations of parochialism and national egoism. Consistently carrying out the Leninist national policy, the Party is irreconcilable towards any and all manifestations of nationalism and chauvinism, national exclusiveness and isolation. The Party educates the working people in the spirit of love for their socialist country, and brotherhood of free peoples. Socialism has given rise to a new type of patriotism, organically fused with internationalism.

### **Merited Esteem**

The Soviet press often prints decrees by the USSR Supreme Soviet conferring Soviet orders and medals on people for outstanding contributions to the national economy, culture and art. The recipients of these awards include Jews.

The title of Hero of the Soviet Union has been conferred on 117 Jews, and that of Hero of Socialist Labour, on 55 Jews. Four have received the title twice, and three have become thrice Hero of Socialist Labour.

Altogether 339,000 Jews have been awarded Soviet orders and medals for valour in battle, and achievements in production, science and arts.

Out of 844 persons who have won Lenin Pri-

zes, 564 are Russians, 96 are Jews and 184 are of other nationalities.

It has long been a tradition in the Soviet Union to name streets and squares after people who are greatly esteemed. Very often this is done at the request of residents themselves. This tradition is a way of honouring famous countrymen—scientists, writers, revolutionaries, generals, war and labour heroes.

Sverdlovsk, a large administrative and industrial centre in the Urals, dozens of factories, collective farms, educational establishments, a central district and a central square in Moscow have been named after Yakov Sverdlov, first President of the Soviet Union.

During the last 10-15 years alone, dozens of streets have been named after Jewish celebrities, including Sholem Aleichem Street in Kiev, Samuel Galkin (a Jewish poet) Street in Rogachyov, Nakhimson (a revolutionary) Street in Yaroslavl. In Kronstadt there is a street named after Grigory Feigin, a Civil War hero; in Berdichev—a street named after the Slomnitsky sisters who were revolutionaries. A street in Vilnius is named after Itskhak Vitenberg, an anti-fascist resistance hero; a street in Sverdlovsk bears the name of Yakov Shenkman, a hero of the Civil War. Dnepropetrovsk has a street named after Grigory Chudnovsky, a revolutionary. In Moscow there is a street named after Hero of the Soviet Union Lazar Papernik. Two streets in Gomel were named after Heroes of the Soviet Union Katunin and Shandalov. A street in Novosibirsk bears the name of Hero of the Soviet Union Boris Kugel; Vitebsk has a street named after Hero of the Soviet Union Iosif Bumagin. In Pinsk there is a

street bearing the name of Alexander Berkovich, a partisan; in Gdov (Pskov Region) one of the streets is named after Tevye Pechatnikov, a Second World War hero, etc.

A number of Soviet sea and river boats are also named after distinguished Jews.

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The facts and figures about Soviet Jewry cited in this pamphlet show how far from reality is the gloomy picture of Soviet Jews usually painted by bourgeois propagandists in the West. Soviet Jews actively contribute to all aspects of socialist society of which they are full-fledged members. Like the other nationalities they enjoy all rights, privileges and advantages granted to the Soviet people by the state and the Constitution irrespective of nationality, race or religion.

To those who still doubt all this we would like to repeat what Yekhuda Leib Levin, Chief Rabbi of Moscow, said from the rostrum of New York's Hunter College in 1968:

"Come to us and see things for yourselves!"

# Supplement

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**Soviet embassies in certain Western countries, the USSR Mission to the United Nations and Novosti Press Agency receive letters from individuals and organizations asking about different aspects of Jewish life in the Soviet Union. The following are replies by Novosti Press Agency to the most typical questions concerning Soviet Jews.**

## **Questions and Answers About Soviet Jews**

### *Is There Anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union?*

Any manifestation of national intolerance, including anti-Semitism, is incompatible with the Soviet mode of life and severely punished by law.

The Soviet Union is the world's first state where any manifestation of national or racial intolerance is punishable by law.

Article 123 of the USSR Constitution reads: "Equality of rights of citizens of the USSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, government, cultural, political and other social activity, is an indefeasible law.

"Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or, conversely, the establishment of any direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, are punishable by law."

Under the criminal codes of the Russian Fede-

ration and all other Soviet Republics any attempt to sow national or racial discord is punishable by long imprisonment or exile.

It is hard for Soviet people to believe there are restrictions on Jews visiting certain golf clubs in Britain or staying at certain hotels in the United States, let alone open national and racial discrimination and segregation as practiced in the USA, the Republic of South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and some other countries of the "free world."

Unfortunately, there are still survivals of national prejudice. Usually it is the culturally backward people who retain such prejudices. National intolerance is manifested in disrespect for people of other nationalities, in attempts by some parents to prevent their children from entering into "mixed" marriages. In other words, these are isolated cases, survivals of the past which do not become social conflicts and which run counter to the national policy of the Soviet state and the Communist Party.

What is the reason for the still surviving manifestations of national intolerance in Soviet socialist society?

For centuries Russian tsarism fostered national discord and hatred between the nations of the Russian empire. In this way the aristocratic-landlord oligarchy and, subsequently, the bourgeoisie sought to keep the mass of working people in subjugation and to divert their discontent with the prevailing social system into national hatred and chauvinism. Widespread anti-Semitism was one of the manifestations of such a policy.

The Socialist Revolution of October 1917 eliminated the social and economic basis for na-

tional intolerance and discord. The Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia signed by Lenin proclaimed equality of the peoples of Russia.

Complete equality, rising material standards, encouragement and promotion of national cultures and their mutual enrichment helped mould a closely-knit community of Soviet people of different nationalities. The inviolable friendship uniting the Soviet peoples was vividly demonstrated during the grim years of the war against fascism. Joint effort of all Soviet nations in building a communist society helps eradicate the survivals of national intolerance, including anti-Semitism.

*What Is the Purpose for the Introduction in the Soviet Union of the Domestic Passports Indicating Nationality?*

The passport in the USSR is the main document certifying that the bearer is a Soviet citizen. It is issued to all citizens residing in the Soviet Union, irrespective of nationality, on reaching the age of 16.

The passport contains the photo of the bearer, indicates his surname, first name and patronymic, the date and place of birth, nationality (not only Jewish but any other, too), domicile, registration of marriage, the number of children. Distinguishing marks of the bearer are not indicated.

The passports are necessary to enable Soviet citizens to exercise their rights guaranteed by the Constitution and to enjoy the benefits they are entitled to. These include the right to elect and be elected, the right to work, to free medical aid, to free education, free use of libraries, to maintenance in case of sickness and disability, the

right of mothers of large families to obtain a grant, the right to hotel accommodation at reduced cost (Soviet citizens pay only about one-third of the amount paid by foreigners for hotel accommodation), etc.

The Soviet Union is a federative state incorporating over a hundred nationalities who are all Soviet citizens. This makes it necessary to specify in the Soviet passport the nationality of the bearer.

At the time when the Soviet passport system was introduced there were proposals to specify only the Russian or a few of the most numerous nationalities, or to denote nationality according to the place of birth or domicile. These proposals were turned down since they objectively could be construed as disregard for other nationalities or as an attempt at forced assimilation.

A person's nationality is determined by the nationality of his parents regardless of the place of birth or domicile (be it Russia, the Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Latvia or any other republic). The bearer of the passport is free to choose the nationality of either parent.

Thus, the Soviet passport is an important means of national identification. Specifying nationality betokens respect for the nation of its bearer.

*What Is the Attitude in the Soviet Union to Zionism?*

*Are There "Socialist Trends" in Modern Zionism?*

At the turn of this century Lenin, upon studying the ideas of Zionism, concluded that Zionism

was bourgeois nationalism opposed to proletarian internationalism.

Lenin's assessment of Zionism remains topical today. Contemporary Zionism has somewhat modernized its tactics. Making use of "sentiments" of a part of the Jewish working people in the West towards Israel, ideologists of Zionism now propagate their new pet theory of what they call "socialist versions and trends" in their movement. But what "socialist trends" or "versions" can there be in a typically bourgeois-nationalist movement like modern Zionism?

Modern history knows of quite a few instances when nationalism, chauvinism and other bourgeois movements used socialist verbiage to cover up their reactionary, anti-popular and class nature. These movements aim to employ the working masses' natural bent for socialism for their selfish ends. They seek to replace class antagonism with a "superclass unity" of national interests, etc. Zionism is a typical sample of this kind of theory and practice. Compromising attitudes to such attempts only play into the hands of the big bourgeoisie masterminding the Zionist movement.

One's attitude to Israel as a state must not be equated with the attitude to Zionism. The Israeli working people who have turned barren deserts into fertile fields and blossoming orchards are to be commended. But nothing can obscure the fact that Israel is a typical bourgeois state founded on the exploitation of the toiling masses. One cannot ignore the fact that this state is bossed by elements whose reactionary nature is manifested not only in extremism in foreign policy but also in



their approach to the solution of major domestic problems.

There are questions which, putting it mildly, puzzle not only Soviet Jews but also Jews in other countries. For two thousand years the Jews scattered throughout the world as a national minority suffered cruel persecution, hatred and discrimination. It would seem that with the establishment of the Jewish state of Israel in 1948 its leaders should have set themselves the main task of ensuring a fair solution of the problem of the Arab national minority, of showing not only tolerance to the Palestinian Arabs but doing everything necessary to ensure their complete equality and national development. This, would have restrained the anti-Semites, discriminators and chauvinists. Moreover, it would have certainly promoted normal, good-neighbourly relationships with the neighbouring Arab states.

But what actually happened? Having created "the problem of the Palestinian Arabs" the Israeli leaders now see the answer in a forced deportation of these Arabs from the country. In other words, the Israeli leaders have embarked on a rather beaten (above all, by anti-Semites) path of solving the "national question." Moreover, in justifying this kind of "national policy" the late Premier Levi Eshkol in his last interview to a *Newsweek* correspondent claimed openly that no national minority could be tolerated. In saying this he made reference to the situation in the Lebanon and Cyprus. Was he aware at that time that such theories have a direct bearing on many millions of Jews scattered all over the world as national minorities? Is it not an old Zionist trick — on the one hand to urge all Jews in the world

to support Israel or at least to be "sympathetic" with it, and, on the other hand, to foment the distrust of other nations in the Jewish minority and stir doubts as to the possibility of solving the "Jewish question" in other countries.

### *What is the Soviet Union's Attitude to the State of Israel?*

The Soviet Union has never been opposed to the State of Israel. Soviet leaders have repeatedly stated this. This is apparent in the speech made by Soviet Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin at the United Nations in 1967 after Israel's aggression against the Arab states, and his interview in *Life* early in 1968. Moreover, the USSR was one of the first states to recognise the State of Israel.

But the Soviet Union is vigorously opposed to the adventurist policy of the Israeli leaders which is fraught with serious consequences for the cause of peace.

The Soviet Union is not the only country to condemn the Israeli extremists who have illegally seized Arab territory and continue to occupy it. This aggressive policy was censured by the majority of the UN member-states, including many Western countries.

The Soviet Union fully supports the resolution of the UN Security Council of November 22, 1967 providing for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied Arab territory, as well as for the observance of the legitimate guarantees and rights of the State of Israel.

The Soviet Union's support of the Arab states stems from the peace-loving policy of the Soviet

Union for curbing the aggressors and rendering their victims all-round support.

*Do the Soviet Authorities Ban the Emigration of Jews to Israel?*

Most applications to emigrate from the Soviet Union are submitted by persons wishing to reunite with relatives residing in Israel and many other countries.

In view of the exceptionally strained situation in the Middle East brought about by incessant acts of aggression on the part of Israeli extremists, Soviet emigration authorities carefully consider each application to go to Israel. In so doing they seek to foresee all possible consequences of permitting Soviet citizens to go there.

The situation that has developed in that part of the world compels the Soviet emigration authorities, in considering such applications, to take into account not only the interests of the applicants but those of the Soviet state and the friendly Arab countries—victims of continuing Israeli aggression.

But this does not mean that Soviet Jews are absolutely banned from going to Israel. When a family is separated from the breadwinner, which has a detrimental effect on children's upbringing or prevents incapacitated members of the family from getting the necessary care, the Soviet emigration authorities, guided by humanitarian considerations and notwithstanding the strained situation and the severed diplomatic relations with the state of Israel, allow Soviet Jews to leave for that country.

From the beginning of the six-day war in 1967 to January 1, 1970, 57 families from Soviet Geor-

gia, totalling some 300 people, left for Israel. In 1969, several families numbering 41 people left Odessa Region, etc. Those leaving abroad are allowed to take along their property and valuables.

Of late, there have been far fewer applications for emigration to Israel undoubtedly because of the aggravation of the military and political situation there. In any case, that is the reason given by persons withdrawing their applications.

### *Why Are There no Jewish Schools in the Soviet Union?*

We can speak here only of secular schools since the Church in this country is separated from the State, and the School is separated from the Church.

During the first years of Soviet government general and vocational schools, with teaching conducted in Yiddish, were established in localities with compact Jewish population. However, they did not last long for several reasons.

Firstly, in tsarist Russia the most cherished dream of every Jewish family was to educate the children in a Russian secondary school. Very often they failed to do so (just recall Sholem Aleichem's stories). Therefore, after the establishment of Soviet power many Jewish families preferred to send their children to Russian schools since they regarded this opportunity as a manifestation of their equality.

Secondly, many Jews realized that on graduation from a Russian school their children would be better equipped for continuing their education in the country's higher learning establishments and choosing their career.

Thirdly, the abolition of the Jewish pale pro-

moted massive Jewish migration from settlements into big towns all over the country. This led to the gradual closing down of Yiddish-language schools in settlements which once had compact Jewish population.

Of course, there still are some Jewish families who would like their children to learn Yiddish. How do they manage this?

In its supplements *Sovetisch Heimland* regularly carries Yiddish-language lessons for independent study.

A Yiddish-language section has recently been opened at a Leningrad educational centre.

As we see, measures are being taken to solve this problem.

As for Jewish history it is given sufficient space in the textbooks on ancient and medieval history for the general and higher schools.

*Is it true that the trial in late 1970 in Leningrad of a group of criminals who had attempted to hijack a Soviet passenger plane had nationality (anti-Semitic) implications?*

The bourgeois press in the West, and particularly Zionist propaganda, raised a tremendous hullabaloo around this trial in an attempt to pass criminals off as "heroes" and to label an act of justice an "outburst of Soviet anti-Semitism."

Who was tried in Leningrad and what were they accused of? The court established beyond any doubt on the strength of the findings of the investigation and the testimony of the accused that a criminal group led by Mark Dymshitz and Eduard Kuznetsov had methodically planned the seizure of a passenger plane in order to fly it abroad. The criminal plan, code-named "Wed-

ding," included a cold-blooded assault on the crew members. When arrested during embarkation, the criminals were found to possess firearms, knives, an axe, knuckle-dusters, cudgels and garrottes. This entire "gentleman's kit" was produced in evidence at the trial.

The plotters divided into two groups and intended to carry out their plan in two stages. The first group was to board a plane at the "Smolnoye" airport and seize it when it landed at another aerodrome in the Leningrad Region. The second group was to carry away the two pilots, dead or alive, and leave them in the forest.

The criminal group consisted of two Russians and one Ukrainian, the rest being Jews. Four of the plotters—Eduard Kuznetsov, Boris Penson, Yuri Fedorov and Alexei Murzhenko—had previously been tried for various crimes, and had served prison sentences, in Penson's case for attempted rape.

When one of the defendants, Anatoly Altman, told the Collegium of the Leningrad City Court what he had intended to do when attacking the pilots according to the plan, the state prosecutor exclaimed: "But this is a grave crime!"

"I wasn't concerned with my moral purity!" said Altman cynically.

Eduard Kuznetsov's wife, Silva, had built a mould designed by her husband, in which she cast a weighty knuckle-duster.

Mark Dymshitz, one of the ringleaders and formerly a professional pilot, was to fly the captured plane. A person of enormous ambition and vanity, he had not worked for some time prior to the crime. Having failed in his career in aviation, he put the blame for it on society. The "fa-

mily dictator," as he was called by some of his acquaintances, Dymshitz even forced his two daughters into the criminal adventure. He had manufactured a revolver and carried it without the necessary permit.

The other defendants, though well-educated and trained in different professions, had refused to undertake regular employment and had engaged in illegal transactions, speculating in goods received in parcels from the British firm "Dinnerman." A considerable share of the proceeds went into the planned operation "Wedding."

This is a true picture of the criminals who have been painted as "heroes" and "martyrs" by Western propaganda.

The Leningrad trial was conducted in accordance with all the regulations prescribed by Soviet law, in full compliance with the criminal code and established legal practice of the Russian Federation. All the circumstances of the case, as set forth in the 24 volumes of the preliminary investigation, were given a thorough, exhaustive and objective consideration. The defendants' relatives retained the best lawyers of Moscow and Leningrad to act as counsels for the defence.

All the defendants pleaded guilty.

Fully disclosed at the trial was the criminal character of the conspiracy. Below are a few excerpts from the last pleas of the accused, who had come to realize the full extent of their guilt and asked for leniency.

Izrail Zalmanson: "I consider my actions criminal. I have violated the law."

Yuri Fedorov: "I admit that an attempt to attack pilots and seize a plane is a crime."

"I admit my guilt," said Iosif Mendelevich,

"and I repent what I have done. I realize that I must bear responsibility before the law."

"The outcome of the conspiracy is natural," said Mendel Bodnia. "I am convinced now that the actions of the group, including my actions, were criminal. Should any such plan be conceived again, I would condemn it."

Leiba Khnokh and other defendants stated that they had "experienced no discrimination" because of their race.

The Criminal Collegium of the Leningrad City Court found all the accused guilty and passed the death sentence on Dymshitz and Kuznetsov as the organizers of a particularly grave crime. The other defendants were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

Having reviewed the case on appeal and acting in consideration of the fact that the piratical attempt to seize the plane had been prevented, and that a death sentence is, under Soviet law, the extreme penalty, the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, commuted the death sentence passed on Dymshitz and Kuznetsov to 15 years imprisonment.

The investigating agencies showed the utmost leniency to those defendants whose guilt was mitigated by even the slightest extenuating circumstances. A few hours after the arrest of the participants in the abortive "Wedding" operation, the authorities released Alevtina, wife of Mark Dymshitz, and their daughters Elizaveta, aged 19 and Yulia, aged 15, from custody. Dymshitz had induced his daughters to take part in the crime through sustained psychological pressure. M. Khnokh was released from custody for health reasons.



The penalty passed by the Leningrad Court on the eleven criminals fully conforms with the recent decisions of the 25th session of the UN General Assembly directed against the hijacking of civilian aircraft. These decisions call upon states to take all adequate measures to anticipate, prevent or suppress such acts within their jurisdiction at any stage of committal and to provide for legal action against the perpetrators and for their punishment.

These are the facts of the Leningrad trial.

**СОВЕТСКИЕ ЕВРЕИ:  
МИФЫ И ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ**

*на английском языке*

Цена 15 коп.



